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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/005,137	12/05/2001	Lynn Hambright	2001P11666 US01	8060

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EXAMINER

COBANOGLU, DILEK B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3626

DATE MAILED: 01/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/005,137

Applicant(s)

HAMBRIGHT ET AL.

Examiner

Dilek B. Cobanoglu

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12/5/01 ~~4-27~~
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/05/2001.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-27 have been examined.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 26 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 26 is same as claim 24 respectively. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable by Pritchard (U.S. Patent No. 4,491,725).

A. As per claim 1, Pritchard discloses a method for determining payment for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

- i. receiving a record identifying a service provided to a specific entity (Pritchard; col. 6, lines 63-66);
- ii. automatically creating a reimbursement record grouping an item identifying said provided service together with an item identifying an other

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service provided to said specific entity based on predetermined service record allocation rules (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52 and col. 8, lines 57-63); and

iii. calculating a reimbursement amount for said identified provided service and said other service provided to said specific entity based on a reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 10, lines 35-45).

B. As per claim 2, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 1, wherein said step of automatically creating a reimbursement record comprises creating a reimbursement record without manual intervention from received records identifying different types of services provided to said specific entity on separate occasions (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52).

C. As per claim 3, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 2, wherein said different types of services comprise an outpatient service and an inpatient service (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-34 and col. 4, lines 34-42).

Examiner considers set of services provided in different locations such as a hospital, emergency room, doctor's office etc. include inpatient and outpatient services.

D. As per claim 4, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 1, wherein said predetermined service record allocation rules comprise at least one of, (a) rules determining whether said provided service as well as said other service qualify for reimbursement under at least one reimbursement contract, and (b) rules in a reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52).

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E. As per claim 5, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 1, wherein said reimbursement contract comprises a healthcare policy covering said specific entity and said specific entity comprises a patient (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52).

F. As per claim 6, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 1 implemented as a program of instructions contained on a storage medium and executable by a machine (Pritchard; col. 11, lines 34-51).

G. As per claim 7, Pritchard discloses a user interface supporting a method for determining payment for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

- i. generating a first user selectable menu icon for initiating display of a reimbursement record, said reimbursement record showing (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63)
- ii. a group of items including an item identifying a service provided to a specific entity together with an item identifying an other service provided to said specific entity based on predetermined service record allocation rules (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 30-36); and
- iii. calculated reimbursement amounts for said identified provided service and said other service provided to said specific entity based on a reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63).

H. As per claim 8, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 7, including the step of generating a second user selectable menu icon for initiating display of

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a bill including said reimbursement amount for said provided service and said other service (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63).

I. As per claim 9, Pritchard discloses a method for use in billing for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

- i. receiving a record identifying a service provided to an entity (Pritchard; col. 6, lines 63-66);
- ii. applying predetermined allocation rules for identifying a reimbursement record indicating a group of services to be billed together on a single bill, said group of services having been provided to said entity (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63);
- iii. updating said identified reimbursement record to incorporate a record item representing said identified provided service (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63);
- iv. calculating a reimbursement amount for said identified provided service based on predetermined reimbursement rules (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63); and
- v. preparing a bill including said group of services and said identified provided service for communication to a payer (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63).

J. As per claim 10, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 9, wherein said predetermined allocation rules comprise rules for determining said identified

provided service as well as said group of services qualify for reimbursement under at least one of (a) a single reimbursement contract and (b) a common set of reimbursement contracts (Pritchard; col. 9, lines 3-7 and col. 10, lines 35-45).

K. As per claim 11, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 9, wherein said predetermined allocation rules comprise rules in a reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 9, lines 3-7).

L. As per claim 12, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 9, wherein said predetermined allocation rules identify a reimbursement record to incorporate a record item representing said identified provided service based on the type of said identified provided service (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52).

M. As per claim 13, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 12, wherein said type of said identified provided service comprises at least one of, (a) an inpatient service, (b) an outpatient service and (c) an emergency service (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-34 and col. 4, lines 34-42).

Examiner considers set of services provided in different locations such as a hospital, emergency room, doctor's office etc. include inpatient and outpatient services.

N. As per claim 14, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 9, including the step of identifying and prioritizing at least one of (a) reimbursement contracts and (b) policies, comprising predetermined reimbursement rules and selecting said predetermined reimbursement rules from said prioritized and identified

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predetermined reimbursement rules for calculating reimbursement for said identified provided service (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52 and col. 9, lines 3-7).

O. As per claim 15, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 9, wherein said reimbursement record indicates said group of services are reimbursable according to rules in a single reimbursement contract and including the step of determining whether said identified service is also reimbursable according to rules in said single reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52).

P. As per claim 16, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 9, wherein said specific entity comprises at least one of, (a) a patient, (b) a company, (c) an individual person and (d) a group of people and including the step of searching for other services also provided to said specific entity (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52).

Q. As per claim 17, Pritchard discloses a method for determining payment for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

- i. receiving a record identifying a service provided to a specific entity (Pritchard; col. 6, lines 63-66);
- ii. searching for a record of an additional service provided to said specific entity (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52);
- iii. determining whether said identified service as well as said additional service provided to said specific entity qualify for reimbursement

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under a single reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 9, lines 3-7 and col. 10, lines 35-45);

iv. creating a record indicating said identified service and additional service provided to said specific entity qualify for reimbursement under a single reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52 and col. 8, lines 57-63); and

v. calculating a reimbursement amount for said identified service and additional service provided to said specific entity based on said single reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63).

R. As per claim 18, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 17, including the step of preparing a bill including said reimbursement amount for said identified service and additional service for communication to a payer (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63).

S. As per claim 19, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 17, wherein said specific entity comprises at least one of, (a) a patient, (b) a company, (c) an individual person and (d) a group of people (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52).

T. As per claim 20, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 17, including the steps of identifying and prioritizing at least one of, (a) reimbursement contracts and (b) policies associated with reimbursement contracts, applicable for reimbursing for said identified service and additional service and selecting said single reimbursement contract from one of, (i) said prioritized reimbursement contracts and (ii) said reimbursement contracts

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associated with said prioritized policies (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52 and col. 9, lines 3-7).

U. As per claim 21, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 17, including the step of searching for other services also provided to said specific entity (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52).

V. As per claim 22, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 17, including the step of sorting said identified service and additional service by date service is performed (Pritchard; col. 5, lines 25-32).

W. As per claim 23, Pritchard discloses a method for determining payment for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

- i. receiving a record identifying a service provided to a specific entity (Pritchard; col. 6, lines 63-66);
- ii. searching for a reimbursement record indicating at least one other service provided to said specific entity (Pritchard; col. 3, lines 31-52 and col. 5, lines 25-32);
- iii. determining whether said identified service as well as said at least one other service provided to said specific entity qualify for reimbursement under a single reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 9, lines 3-7 and col. 10, lines 35-45);

- iv. updating said reimbursement record to incorporate a record item representing said identified provided service in response to determination of said qualification (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63); and
- v. calculating a reimbursement amount for said identified service and one other service provided to said specific entity based on said single reimbursement contract (Pritchard; col. 10, lines 35-45).

X. As per claim 24, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 23, including the step of preparing a bill including said reimbursement amount for said identified service and one other service for communication to a payer (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63).

Y. As per claim 25, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 23, wherein

- i. said reimbursement record indicates services provided to said entity within a specific period and wherein said updating step comprises (Pritchard; col. 5, lines 25-32)
- ii. updating said reimbursement record to incorporate said record item representing said identified provided service in response to determination said identified provided service was provided within said specific period (Pritchard; col. 8, lines 57-63).

Z. Claim 26 repeats claim 24 exactly.

AA. As per claim 27, Pritchard discloses a method according to claim 23, including the step of determining said identified provided service as well as said group of services qualify for reimbursement under at least one of (a) a single

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reimbursement contract and (b) a common set of reimbursement contracts (Pritchard; col. 9, lines 3-7 and col. 10, lines 35-45).

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The cited but not used prior art teach System and method for optimizing medical diagnosis, procedures and claims using a structured search space 2001/0056356, System and method for building and manipulating a centralized measurement value database 2002/0186818, Health care billing monitor system for detecting health care provider fraud 6,826,536 B1, Method and system for providing evaluation data from tracked, formatted administrative data of a service provider 6,915,266 B1.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dilek B. Cobanoglu whose telephone number is 571-272-8295. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-4:30.

7. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Thomas can be reached on 571-272-6776. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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8. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DBC

DBC
Art Unit 3626
01/13/2006


C. LUKE GILLIGAN
PATENT EXAMINER